no. 1
OCT.
MARVELMANIA
MAGAZINE
JACK KIRBY
CAPTAIN AMERICA

Direct to you by way of our official MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL carrier pigeon, (actually, it's just Irving Forbush in a Vulture suit!) comes the Mighty MARVELMANIA membership kit! The gang here at Marvelmania Central has been working their fingers to the bone concocting this madness for you, because we know it's just what you've always wanted. And, with your help, it will continue to be what you've always wanted.

In the past, comic book readers have been longing for fan clubs pertaining to their favorite pasttime...And, in the past, comic book fan clubs have been little more than vehicles for marketing membership kits. In looking over past clubs, we note that with two exceptions, no club has offered the membership-at-large anything after they sold the basic membership kit...

One of these was the long-defunct E.C. Fan-Addict Society which issued a few bulletins from time to time for news and back-issue trading, and also put out one or two items such as photographs of the hosts of their ghostly-type magazines. (In reality, those photos were Johnny Craig--our own invincible Iron Man inker--in make-up!) When E.C. folded, so did the club.

The other "follow-through" club was our own Merry Marvel Marching Society which has now been incorporated into the new, improved MARVELMANIA club. We feel that you Marvelites deserve the best. Your letters to the Bullpen have constantly expressed the feeling that more posters were wanted...more stationery... and more items along those lines. After many months of secret planning in New York and Los Angeles, we burst forward with what shall soon prove to be only the beginning of the greatest comic book club in the history of mankind!

Throughout the catalog and the remainder of this publication, we have tried to stress involvement on your part. Frankly, this club will be whatever you want it to be and it will do whatever you want it to do. Many members have come through our offices and sat in on our sessions to discuss what we should do and thus far, we've had to go pretty much based on our own judgement. Now, we don't have to--We have you out there to send in your ideas, send in your criticisms, send in your suggestions, no matter how nutty they are! Every single one of them will be read and considered. Only in that way may both our dreams be realized. Only in that way can we know what to plan for.

The basic MARVELMANIA membership kits represent a few months of yelling at printers, pasting-up copy, and squeezing our way past a mountain of mailing tubes which, even now, seem to be taking control of our office. It will all be worth it. It already is.

We don't have to make any sort of a sales pitch for the merchandise in the catalog. By now, you've probably selected the goodies you want and sent in for them. Only time will tell if we accurately predicted what you merry ones want...but from the reactions we've gotten so far, we're confident we've presented you with desirable material this time...And in the future, you'll decide what comes out, so there won't be any suspense there. This promises to be the most exciting thing to happen to comic books since Irv Forbush tried to mail subscription copies of Silver Surfer with Comics Code stamps!

Enough pep-talk! For one thing, you'll be getting more of it later in this issue as we try to generate this old club spirit. And secondly, if you're any kind of Marvel fan, you already had the old club spirit, as evidenced by your purchase of the kit. Your measly buck seventy-five has bought you all of the bargains in the kit and has brought you into a club with members who, like you, love Marvel comics. Your twenty-five cents for postage and handling has only brought you a used mailing tube and a bulk rate sticker, but we all know how far a quarter goes these days!

We would like to acknowledge special thanks to the Los Angeles Comic Club, without whose help this publication could not have been put together. Special thank you goes out to Mark Evanier who spearheaded this entire publication directing the format, layout and copy.

--Don Wallace

Editorial:

MARVELMANIA MAGAZINE OCT. NO.1

The advent of this publication came as no great idea. We conducted long "bull" sessions in preparation of the club and it was constantly being expressed that some way would be needed for us to maintain some communication with the membership-at-large. We felt it to be imperative that we be able to make regular announcements to Marvelmania Assembled about club activities and to put forth ideas for your reaction and consideration. How this necessity developed into a real magazine (With Kirby and Steranko covers, no less!) is something of a mystery--It may have something to do with those 16" pizzas the staff here devours as lunch. The scent of garlic bread has been known to do strange things to men and their judgement...Or it may have had something to do with the fear that the Marvelmania kits might be delivered on time--a capital sin as the super-hero fan clubs of the past will attest.

Once conceived, ideas as to what should go into the mag began to come in faster than Quicksilver on his way to the newsstand on the day X-Men come out. What we present in this issue (put together at short notice) are a few of these ideas. New ones will appear as they are suggested by the readership and old ones will disappear as they are disapproved by the readership. Two regular columnists (Tony Isabella and yours truly) debut this issue with two more columnists to be chosen out of the submissions for #2. We invite all members to send in articles and art...as well as suggestions as to how to improve this fanzine and Marvelmania itself. This is your magazine. If you don't believe it, let us know and we'll let you pay the printing bill! For further info, consult the box at right.

As for the future, we are planning more pages, a wider variety of material, and a regular publishing schedule--hopefully monthly if you want it enough. There are, however, many technical problems which must be solved before we can announce regular publication. How soon we will tackle these problems and what effort we'll make will depend upon the response to this issue. Frankly, I have some other important duties to worry about (both at Marvelmania and at U.C.L.A.) and if there's no enthusiasm out there, there won't be any of it around here. A bulletin will be issued within the next two months explaining how to subscribe to the magazine. It will be enclosed in all orders sent out around that time, but if you want to be assured of receiving it, send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope along with your suggestions and mark it: "MAG BULLETIN". I'll see you get a copy of it.

In closing, I hope you enjoy our little concoction and I'm hoping to see samples of your publications and work. The keyword here is COMMUNICATION. Let me know your ideas and I'll see if we can institute them! We're here to help, so send up a flare or something!

Thanks and eschew obfuscation,

MARK EVANIER

Mark Evanier, editor

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Please address all mail and submissions to this periodical, as well as all mail pertaining to club activities to:

MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL--Dept. F
P.O.B. #718
CULVER CITY, CALIF. 90230

If you desire a reply and/or return of your submission, please specify so in your letter and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Also, include your complete address on the letter.

MARVELMANIA MAGAZINE No.1, OCTOBER--1969
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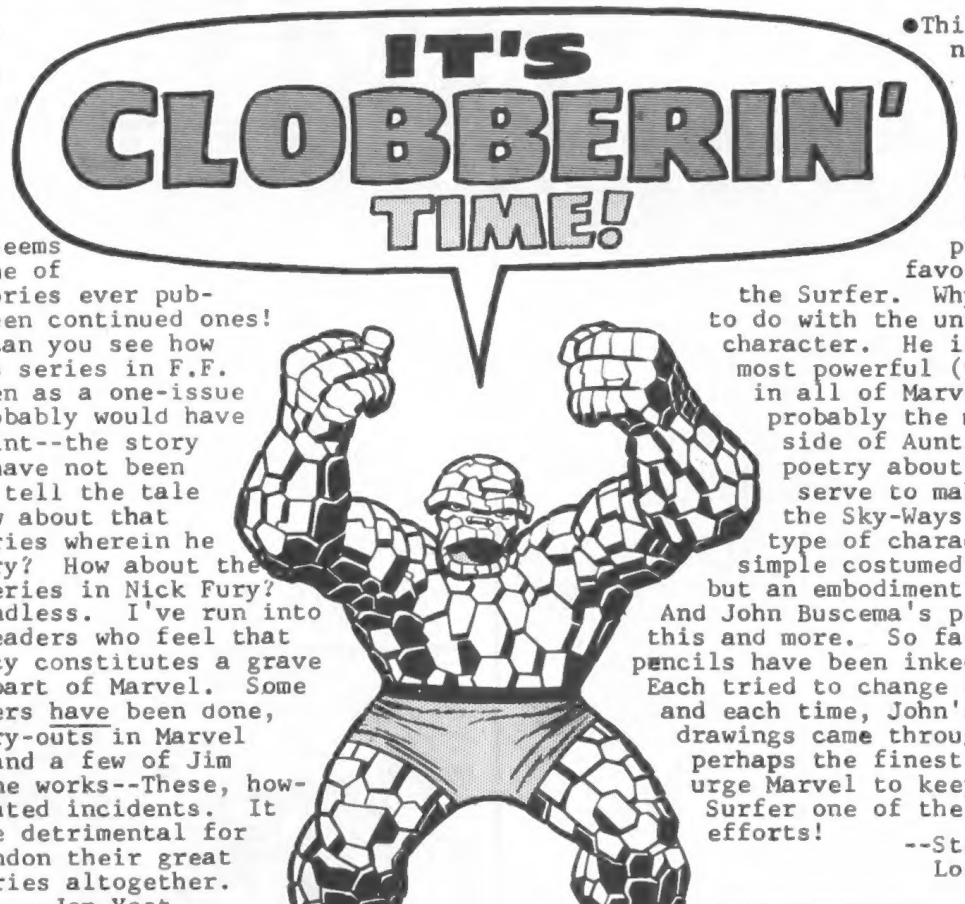
Letters:

No magazine is complete without a letter column, and just as this magazine is your magazine, this letter column is your letter column...so use it! Each month, we propose to feature a few pages of letters from you Marvelmaniacs about this publication, club activities, and Marvel's recent triumphs and/or defeats in the wacky world of comic book competition. So what are you waiting for--? An engraved invitation delivered in person by Mary Jane Watson or something? For this first installment, we've asked a few of the club members in this area to give their opinions--so let the discussion commence...Or, as the beautifully bashful Benjamin J. Grimm might be prone to put it...



●Recently, it was stated that Marvel is dropping its continued stories. I greet this announcement with mixed reactions. It seems to me that some of the finest stories ever published have been continued ones! For example, can you see how first Inhumans series in F.F. would have been as a one-issue story? It probably would have never seen print--the story length would have not been sufficient to tell the tale properly! How about that Spider-Man series wherein he lost his memory? How about the Yellow Claw series in Nick Fury? The list is endless. I've run into many Marvel readers who feel that this new policy constitutes a grave error on the part of Marvel. Some good one-issuers have been done, such as the try-outs in Marvel Super-Heroes and a few of Jim Steranko's fine works--These, however are isolated incidents. It would be quite detrimental for Marvel to abandon their great continued stories altogether.

--Jon Yost,
Los Angeles

●Count me in as one of those who are glad that Lee and Company have decided to drop continued stories! Oh, I'll admit I've liked some of their past continued efforts--such as that long series in Thor (#114--130) which was basically one long continued story. The grandeur and clever tie-ins added to the stories as a whole. So why am I against Marvel's constant continuations? That's just it --they're constant...almost mandatory, even when the plot doesn't merit continuation which inevitably leads to padding and extra dialogue and wasting more space than is necessary on a bad idea! It's like this--You may like nothing more for dinner that a big juicy steak...But try eating it every night and see how sick you can get of it! Too many spectacular stories can be static! It seems that a policy of continued stories is nothing but static!

--Robert Solomon,
Los Angeles, Ca.

●This is just a short note to express to all of Marvel-Mania, my feeling about Marvel's excellent Silver Surfer comic. I buy and read all the comics Marvel publishes, but my favorite, by far, is the Surfer. Why? I think it has to do with the uniqueness of his character. He is possibly the most powerful (physically) being in all of Marvel...yet he is probably the most gentle this side of Aunt May. There is poetry about the stories that serve to make the Sentinel of the Sky-Ways a three-dimension type of character. He is no simple costumed crime-fighter, but an embodiment of "goodness". And John Buscema's pencilling adds all this and more. So far, his peerless pencils have been inked by three inkers. Each tried to change the style a bit and each time, John's most powerful drawings came through. #3--#6 were perhaps the finest to date. Let's urge Marvel to keep making the Surfer one of their most creative efforts!

--Steve Sherman,
Los Angeles, Calif.

...And there you have a few solicited-at-the-last-minute comments. Next issue, will your letter be on this page. And now if a lowly editor may be permitted an observation, most of the Marvel fans we've come into contact with lately seem to express much the same thought as Jon Yost on the continued story discontinuation policy. And the few who aren't furious over the change, generally seem to make the concession along Rob Solomon's lines that a continued story should be used whenever the plot merits it and likewise a one-issuer! The wisest and coolest head among them all seems to be represented in a letter (which we have since lost, but why give him credit, anyway?) which said something to the effect of: "Why a policy either way? Why can't we readers merely let Stan decide which way each individual story should be done. Some of the new book-length stories were excellent but a few seemed like they could have used some additional space!" And on that compromising note, we bid the mailman adieu!

Doom's Dispatch!

Pay attention, you dumb peasants, as I have no intention of repeating any of this! Be forewarned, I am Dr. Doom! Does not fear grip your heart in its icy hands? Are you so frightened that you cannot speak?

In my boundless wisdom, I have deemed it to be expedient that I explain my profound design. By answering the questions that you may send in to my column, I shall place you in my debt to the day when the world shall grovel at my feet!

Stop whimpering, you dolts--You are perfectly safe...I, Victor Von Doom, shall protect my subjects. Now, let us get on with the business at hand...questions! Ray Harris of Belleville, New Jersey wished to know how the Lizard was able to walk on walls like Spider-Man. What do I care about the Lizard? He is nothing...a mere rodent, as his powers are only those of the various species of lizards on the Earth! Among those species are lizards with suction-claws designed for climbing, hence the repulsive reptile's talents in that respect!

Carl Blohmke, who resides in Flushing, N.Y. desires information as to why the Sub-Mariner is able to keep his hair as neat as it is, even while living under water! As the greatest scientific mind in the world (rivalled only by that egg-headed rubber band, Reed Richards!) I was intrigued by this querie On many occasions, I have had reason to come into contact with this over-grown tuna fish. I once gave him the honor of being my ally, but he proved himself unworthy. As for Carl's question, the secret is adaptation. Each form of life on the surface of this planet must adapt--change--to fit the special needs and problems of its environment. Ducks and geese, for instance, secrete a special oil which protects their feathers in water. Were they not to have this substance, they could not fly or swim...but the specialized traits of water-fowl bring about these adaptings. Similarly, that seaweed-ridden scum of a prince and his Atlantean charges possess skin and hair which is accustomed to living in a watery environment. If such were not to be the casem their race would soon take on the appearance of a group of ill-groomed prunes.

Duties of Monarch Supreme of Latveria do press hard on my schedule, so I must make an end to this writing. In the future, even more questions shall be answered, as soon as you ungrateful readers mail them to me. My address is DOOM'S DISPATCH c/o MARVELMANIA Magazine--Dept. F, Culver City, Ca. 90230. You all understand, of course, that this is but a temporary address for your liege, as the Latverian embassy is currently being refurbished. That concludes my audience with you followers for this issue. You may rise from your kneeling positions and continue with ordinary affairs. Doom has spoken! You heard me--On your way, you insolent clod!

...And now, MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL, the club with a heart and half a page to fill in its magazine gives you out there in Marvel Land, the opportunity you've been waiting for with baited breath! Now, you have the chance to prove yourself a real genius by testing your...

MARVEL I.Q.

Answers on pg. 15

1. The Hulk's real name is:
   a) Bruce Robert Banner
   b) Robert Bruce Banner
   c) William Robert Banner
   d) Star-Spangled Banner

2. J. Jonah Jameson used to publish:
   a) Eye Magazine
   b) Why Magazine
   c) Now Magazine
   d) Better Homes and Gardens

3. Agent of SHIELD was penciled & inked by:
   a) Jim Steranko
   b) Joe Sinnott
   c) John Severin
   d) Jean Shrimpton

4. The slogan on the Fantastic Four is:
   a) "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine!"
   b) "The World's Finest Comic Magazine!"
   c) "The World's Greatest Comic Book!"
   d) "Things Go Better With Coke!"

5. Name all four artists who have penciled Sgt. Fury and his Howling Commandos!

6. The first Fantastic Four Annual Guested:
   a) Dr. Doom
   b) Sub-Mariner
   c) The Incredible Hulk
   d) Millie the Model

7. The host of Chamber of Darkness is:
   a) H.P. Gravely
   b) H.P. Lovecraft
   c) H.P. Ghostly
   d) Homer the Happy Ghost

8. The X-Men defeated Magneto once when:
   a) Cerebro over-loaded his power.
   b) The Mimic absorbed his magnetism.
   c) The Stranger banished him.
   d) Aunt May hit him with a matzo ball.

9. Captain America's girl friend is:
   a) Sharon Carson
   b) Sharon Carter
   c) Sharon Carver
   d) Sharon Sharealike

10. Name all six artists who have penciled Iron Man in his own strip!

SPOTLIGHT on...

IN APPRECIATION:

The grateful group here at MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL would like to take this opportunity to express its thanks to the man who brings Fantastic Four and Thor to life--Jack Kirby for also helping to bring this club to life. Let all know that Jack Kirby gave unsparingly of his brain, his time, and his pencil to get this project off the ground. Without his aid, we'd never have gotten this thing started!

JACK KIRBY

Jack Kirby uses no special devices in his drawings--it's all in the wrist! At times, his dynamic brand of draftsmanship has caused fans to wonder if Kirby might not have discovered some secret formula to capture images on the page. Indeed, many Marvel readers have had visions of Kirby lying with his feet up, waving a magic wand at two enchanted pencils--One each hard at work on Thor and F.F.. It's not so, we now reveal--Those sensational sketches do indeed spring from the pencil of the master, brought to life by thirty years of artistic experience and Kirby's unbounded imagination. He drew action with Captain America and excitement with Stuntman. He hit the mark with Bullseye and got bugged with the Blue Beetle. He got off the trail with Rawhide Kid, but soon got things into the proper perspective with Captain 3-D, an adventure comic printed by a stereo process which gave readers bizarre effects and migraine headaches. Were this list to continue, MARVELMANIA Magazine might well blow its whole printing budget on typing paper, so...

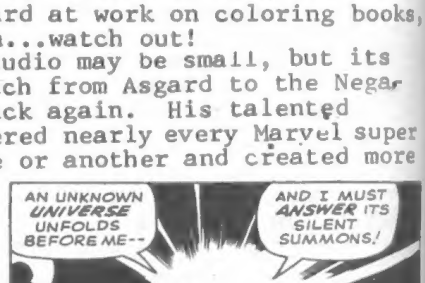
Kirby likes to begin working late in the afternoon and work through the evening. Like other Marvel artists, his pencilling is done onto large sheets of cardboard. Light blue (non-reproducing) lines have been printed onto the pages to rule off 10" by 15" areas for drawing. After inking, the ten by fifteens will be reduced to comic book size for coloring--But our concern now is with the pencilling. Kirby deserves credit for the plotting of the comics he draws. After it's been discussed with the front office in New York, he draws it out and notes his comments in the margins. So complex is the plotting on his stories that he must be sent photostats of his pencilled pages after lettering and before inking...since it will be several months before the issue is out and he must have further stories in the works by then.

Upon seeing the pencils for an upcoming Fantastic Four story involving Marineland, we recently noted how Jolly Jack's pencil work far surpasses the version you readers see. His pencilling is complete--Every bolt of energy, every tiny building, every dot used to represent outer space, every scale on the Thing--it's all there. Offhand, it looks like any artist with a minimum amount of skill could ink Kirby--all that's involved is tracing. Not so--the intricacies of the drawings require great skill and much attention to duplicate...even inking over the originals. By the time the art is inked, reduced, colored, and printed, much of it has been lost. (Not to slight such fine inkers as Joe Sinnott, Frank Giacoia, and Syd Shores--they preserve more of the Kirby genius than perhaps any other inker could!)

The Kirby home, in a stylish California community, not only houses his drawing board but also his lovely wife Rosalind and equally lovely daughters (alphabetically:) Barbara, Lisa, and Susan. Son Neal left the nest some months back. On a recent visit to the Kirby home, we arrived to find two of his daughters hard at work on coloring books, so Marie Severin...watch out!

The Kirby studio may be small, but its boundaries stretch from Asgard to the Negative Zone and back again. His talented hands have rendered nearly every Marvel super hero at one time or another and created more than their fair share of new ideas. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that imagination is not the strength of one man but the health of all.. If that's true, then Jack Kirby is the healthiest man alive! Not 'nuff said, but it'll have to do for now--!

--30--



MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL CLUB NEWS

club minutes:

MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL club activities are beginning to get under way now. With the membership kits just barely arriving in mailboxes the world over, the home office in Los Angeles/Culver City is already working on a host of projects. F'rinstance...

Hollywood Boulevard near Vine is a very colorful stretch of land. Both sides of the streets are lined with theatres, novelty shops, and book shops whose prices on old comic books would make Howard Hughes beg for an increase in his allowance. But each year, it is traditional that all the madness must cease on the evening before Thanksgiving Day and be replaced by a different kind of madness in the form of the Santa Claus Lane Parade! The West Coast's most exciting Xmas parade...in fact, the most colorful Christmas parade anywhere...is held that evening and this year, MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL will be marching along with the rest of the festivities! As of this writing, no decision has been made as to what we'll be doing in the parade--But if it's televised in your area, you'll be able to see it, within a few weeks after the big event! Check the listings of your local Metromedia affiliated TV station and, if you don't have one, watch for the follow-up report in a future club bulletin!

Incidentally, we've received a number of letters from M.M.M.S. members inquiring as to their standing in MARVELMANIA International. To answer it once and for all (Although we're bound to be asked again!) all M.M.M.S. members are officially members of MARVELMANIA. The Merry Marvel Marching Society has been incorporated into the new organization--Not replaced by it. If anyone you know is an MMMSer and has not yet purchased his new kit and will not be able to for a while--Or if he doesn't desire the poster or decals, he may receive the business portion of the kit (the membership card, a copy of the club catalog, and possibly a copy of MARVELMANIA Magazine if there are any left) by sending 50¢ (Yes, we said fifty cents!) to us at P.O.B. 718, Culver City, Ca. 90230. This offer is made only to those who are either unable or not desiring to purchase the whole kit--A kit which many people (those who put it out and those who got theirs free) have called the greatest bargain since honest Irv Forbush bought the Empire State Building for only nineteen cents and a copy of Nick Fury #3! (At least the con-men in New York have taste!)

MARVELMANIA assembled wishes to compliment Marie (the She) Severin on her superb cover for the latest issue of Esquire.

You say you want contests? A couple of doozies will be in upcoming issues. We don't want to give anyone an unfair advantage by tipping off what the contests will be about, but the prizes are certain to make every red-blooded Marvelite drool so much, his socks will shrink! We'll be giving away oodles and oodles of original art and free subscriptions--And those'll just be the consolation prizes!! Wait until you see what the winners are going to get! Just imagine the thrill of opening your mailbox some fine morning and finding Doctor Doom! In person! We're only kidding, but the prizes couldn't be much more exciting! Watch for an advance announcement next month!

Representatives of Marvel and Marvelmania will be making guest appearances on many T.V. shows in the months to come. The exact dates won't be known far enough in advance to put them in the Bullpen Bulletins and we may just be able to squeeze one or two into this mag each issue before it goes to press--So don't be surprised where we turn up and keep those beady little eyes peeled! We've already been invited onto such shows as Steve Allen, Joey Bishop, Johnny Carson, and almost every other such show.

Just one of the high points our appearances on these shows will include is a series of walk-ons by Marvel super-heroes. How is this possible, you ask? Well, even if you don't ask, we're going to tell you...We now have one of Hollywood's foremost costumers hard at work building costumes of such heroes as Captain America, Thor, Spider-Man and Dr. Doom...who may not be a hero, but then again he may be, if you own stock in a Latverian industry. The costume designers guarantee an authentic job but frankly we wonder if they've ever taken lessons in web-line painting. In fact, it may not be the easiest thing in the world to find a quarry where they can purchase some uru for Thor's hammer.

As you doubtlessly know, (unless you spent your summer in hibernation!)(That's a little town outside Munice, Indiana!) (Yes, I know two paranthetical asides in a row is bad grammar!) the lunar landing craft on Apollo 11 was called "Eagle". Well, our good friend Jack Kirby tells us that, prior to the mission, the men in Houston had been planning to nickname the space craft, "Spider" and the astronauts within, "Spider-Men". It seems that the whim of some eagle-lover robbed our Peter Parker of the honor!

Don't go away--the biggest club news is yet to come! See you next issue!

TOYS FOR TOTS

Each year, as Christmas time grows near, the United States Marine Corps Reserve helps to make the season brighter for thousands of under-privileged children through their annual TOYS FOR TOTS campaign. Reserve units around the country collect donated toys for those less-fortunate children who might not receive any presents come Christmas morning. To them, the Marine Corps Reserve is a veritable Santa Claus in that respect.

This year, the Marines will receive a helping hand in their crusade through MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL. We have joined this most worthwhile campaign as of Christmas, 1969...and what a campaign it promises to be!

Captain America, Thor, Spider-Man and other Marvel heroes will be making personal appearances on behalf of TOYS FOR TOTS on television and at special events. Posters bearing the Marvel super-heroes will be on over 100,000 TOYS FOR TOTS barrels located across the country at shopping centers, fire departments, and numerous other locations including the International House of Pancakes restaurants and McDonald's drive-ins.

The TOYS FOR TOTS campaign began in 1948 as three reserve officers in Los Angeles who felt a need in the community for such a drive to help children such as those mentioned previously. Since then, the campaign has grown to the national level with millions of new toys being collected each year. Each year, many manufacturers donate materials and labor necessary for the campaign and television and motion picture stars and studios donate their time and facilities to promote it. This year is no exception--the various networks are supplying us for time for 10,000 commercials here and there and Los Angeles T.V. station KCOP (Channel 13) is staging a toy telethon on December 6 to be hosted by children show host Hobo Kelly. In addition, we will also be staging rallies at various locations around the area, among them being Century City here in Los Angeles. For entertainment, the stars already lined up to participate are: Mike Connors of "Mannix", Peter Graves, Greg Morris, Leonard Nimoy, and Peter Lupus of "Mission: Impossible", the Banana Splits, and a host of others.

In addition, every National General Corp. theatre (Fox) will have one of our TOYS FOR TOTS barrels in its lobby and will show a short on the program during the Coming Attractions portion of their shows over a six-week period prior to Christmas.

And as if that weren't enough, the good people at Foster and Kleiser outdoor advertising are giving us space for a Jack Kirby masterpiece on dozens and dozens of billboards in Southern California, heralding the program. Negotiations are under way with other companies across the nation for still more such publicity. So...if you're driving down the freeway some day and you see Thor staring down on you...Don't panic! It's just TOYS FOR TOTS striking again!

Similar announcements for the campaign will be made on dozens of T.V. shows, including all three network news programs, (Wait'll they see it: "Good night, Chet!"--"Good night Daredevil!") Joey Bishop, Steve Allen, Bozo's Big Top, and just about everything this side of the Farm Report!

If you're half as excited as we are about this and would like to add your support to TOYS FOR TOTS, here's what you can do...

1) Call the Marine Corps Reserve unit in your area and ask to speak to someone with the TOYS FOR TOTS campaign. Identify yourself as a MARVELMANIA member and ask if they need any help. With so many people helping already, it's doubtful--But they might need you to help on telethons or shows or stand in on news photos. In any case, it's important that they know we're there to help.

2) Watch newspapers, magazines, T.V., and radio (If you're the type that likes to watch radio!) for TOYS FOR TOTS publicity. It's equally important that we know where we received publicity--especially that which involves Marvel characters--so that we may know where our strength is. If you see any such publicity, clip it out (If you're the type that likes to clip out TV commercials!) and send it to the magazine here. We also hope to share it with the other members in the future.

3) Tell your friends about the program. Toys collected in each community are then distributed in that community. Anyone who's told about the campaign will see its worth, so the benefits there are obvious.

4) Most of all, give generously yourself to TOYS FOR TOTS. During the drive, we'll be out urging everyone to make Christmas merrier this way...And when they give, it won't just be giving a toy, it'll be giving a smile and a bit of happiness where otherwise there wouldn't be any. Details will be made public during the drive which kicks off with the Santa Claus Lane Parade (Can you remember all the way back to the last page?) and ends in the early portion of December.

Our part in the drive is essentially one of promotion. One week prior to the commencement of the drive, the gentlemen of the press will meet our costumed crusaders at a party at the Brown Derby restaurant. From there on in, Captain America and company will be busy appearing for the crusade. It may well be the greatest task he has ever undertaken and he'll need all the help he can get.

Much of that help is coming from your friend and ours, Jack Kirby. The jolly one has been more than generous with his time to design posters for the campaign. One of his preliminary sketches showed a Marine standing next to Cap and when the directors of the campaign saw it, they raved about Kirby's art and sent back a list of things wrong with the Marine's uniform--too many medals, not enough ribbons, emblem too low on cap, etc. But the posters were sensational and if we thank

Kirby one more time this issue...oh, well--He deserves it: Thank you, Jack Kirby for not only being a most talented artist, but also a most benevolent bullpen-er.

Our fearless leader of the MARVELMANIA group itself hasn't exactly been inactive, either--In fact, our Don Wallace has been so busy lining up special TOYS FOR TOTS activities that by the time you read this, the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps will have flown into town to personally award him a special Captain's commission for his work on behalf of the program. (That's one of those top secret military manuevers you hear so much about!) Don has called on many manufacturers about donating campaign materials and almost without exception, they've been generous with their supplies--especially what we're going to need to print those 100,000 posters! In a future issue, we may find space to salute some of them--But they've been very good about not asking for publicity about their donations, so maybe we won't!

All in all, this promises to be a very beneficial project for all concerned. TOYS FOR TOTS is certainly one of the most worthy donations a body can make--Because your donations go almost directly to children who need them. We hope that every MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL member will find it in himself to donate some time or toys (preferably both) to this campaign. Those of you who publish fanzines--we hope you'll find the space to inform your friends in fandom of what MARVELMANIA is doing here--in case any of them don't look at TV, listen to radio, go to movies, look at billboard advertisments, read magazines, or go by shopping centers. If there's anyone out there who can possibly resist our appeal, well...he'll have to be pretty sheltered. And, incidentally, we do want to hear what you out there are doing in this effort. We're with the TOYS FOR TOTS campaign every year now and it will only help next year's campaign to know exactly what was done this year. Of course, we always want to see any fanzines or publications you members may put out, but--moreover--we want to hear what you've done. Just by talking to merry Marvelmania members who've come through our offices here, we know there's a lot of spirit being generated for this project and we'll be interested to see what use it's put to.

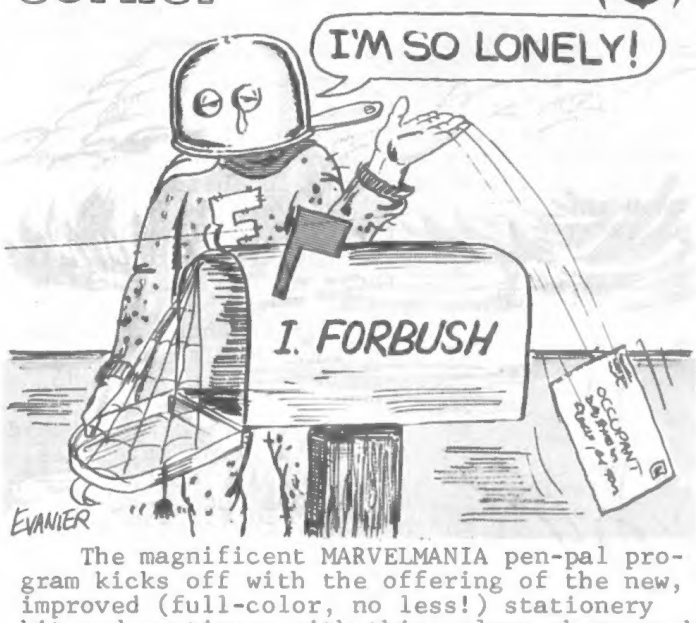
SPECIAL THANKS for help with TOYS FOR TOTS promotion goes to: Staff Sergeant Dell Vernon, USMC and the rest of the Marine Dept, Bob Statton (our peerless poster color separator who donated his time breaking down that Kirby concoction to harmonious hues), and everyone else who helped! Progress report next issue, and it looks optimistic, to say the least!

GIVE TOYS FOR TOTS

U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE

IS THERE A PLACE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD THAT NEEDS A TOYS FOR TOTS POSTER? If so, they may be had from us upon request with your poster order. We cannot spare the time to make individual mailings to club members, but if you're ordering posters from us and you know some nice bulletin board that deserves a full-color Jack Kirby masterpiece. request it in your order form and we'll toss one in at no charge! Glitzy, huh?

Correspondence Corner



The magnificent MARVELMANIA pen-pal program kicks off with the offering of the new, improved (full-color, no less!) stationery kit and continues with this column where each issue we shall strive to unite fanatical fans the world over. How? It's as simple as Irv Forbush, himself--By publishing lists of all those frantic ones out there desiring to obtain fan/friends anywhere in the mad world of MARVELMANIA! Want your name listed? Here's all you have to do...

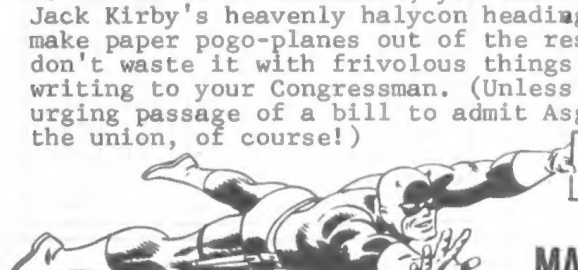
Send the following information on a plain post card to: MARVELMANIA INTERNATIONAL,
DEPT. "C"
P.O.B. 718
Culver City, Calif. 90230

Include your name and complete address, including zip code. If you wish, you may also note one of your interests, thusly...

EXAMPLE: Irving Forbush
317 Rainbow Bridge Rd.
Latveria, New York 31416
*Sgt. Fury fan

Each issue, we'll print as many listings as space will allow and you aficianados out there can get busy corresponding and discussing anything your little hearts desire. (See how generous we are!) In addition, as many listings as possible will be included in the stationery kits as mailed. Lists will be printed from time to time and mailed out to those who order kits and refills to keep you Marvelmaniacs in touch.

Of course, you don't have to use your stunning stationery for the program. You can use it to write to anyone you want to impress and even a few you don't want to impress. As far as we're concerned, you can cut off Jack Kirby's heavenly halycon heading and make paper pogo-planes out of the rest--But don't waste it with frivolous things like writing to your Congressman. (Unless you're urging passage of a bill to admit Asgard to the union, of course!)



MARVELMANIAC OF THE MONTH!

You may be wondering what a "MARVELMANIAC OF THE MONTH" is...and you'd certainly be justified in wondering further, were we not going to tell you now. The aforementioned breed is a title awarded to some mellow member who has somehow distinguished himself (or herself, for that matter!) in some manner, above and beyond the call of mere mortal membership!

This month, the Pickle Finger of Forbush points to Bowler Bill Harroff of 801 West Hively; Elkhart, Indiana 46514. Bill was the first person to send in his loot for the Marvelmania kit--A feat which may seem no great accomplishment to you, but one which we feel shows a great deal of the kind of club spirit we like to see.

A native of Elkhart, Bill was born on November 20, 1953--which makes him a Scorpio. Trusting that releasing that information will not make Bill a target of S.H.I.E.L.D., we continued our interview by inquiring as to Bill's general interests...He likes art and bowling, having won some art awards and surpassing over a 180 bowling average--While I'm sitting here calculating how many points I get for a gutter ball!

As you might guess, our champion charter member has complete (or almost so) sets of all of Marvel's mighty masterworks. His favorite artists come as no great surprise: Kirby, Colan, Adams, Steranko, Romita, Kane, and Sal Buscema. He buys around 20 Marvels a month to keep his collection going, and says he enjoys them all about equally.

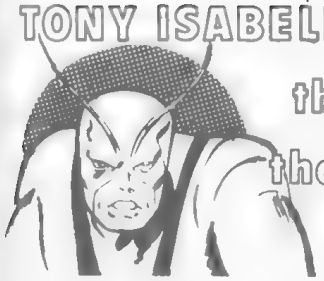
We asked Bill why he joined MARVELMANIA and got this response: "Most of the time, I try to buy anything new Marvel comes up with. I've got sweat-shirts, pillows, photos, and the Marvelmania package now!"

His ambitions? He's dying to complete his Marvel set by obtaining Fantastic Four #1 soon. Says Bill, "Do you realize how hard it is to get that?" He also hopes to be a professional bowler some day.

So, Bill Harroff--MARVELMANIA salutes you as the pride of Elkhart, Indiana! Imperius Rex and all that stuff!

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS in MARVELMANIA are being sent this month to: President Nixon and Vice-President Agnew, Joey Bishop and Regis Philbin, Johnny Carson and Steve Allen, Los Angeles DJ Sam Riddle and American Bandstand host Dick Clark, Leonard (Mr. Spock) Nimoy and Gene (Mr. Producer) Rodenberry of "STAR TREK" for their help with the "TOYS FOR TOTS" campaign, the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, Smiin' Stan Lee, Jolly Jack Kirby, Jaunty Jim Steranko, Super Sol Brodsky, Jazzy Johnny Romita, Magnificent Marie Severin, Hopalong Howard Purcell, Happy Herbie Trimpe, Genuine Gene Colan, Jovial John Buscema, Rollickin' Roy Thomas, and all the rest of the Mighty Marvel Bullpen; all the gang around L.A. who aided in putting the membership kits together, Dan Rowan and Dick Martin, Tiny Tim, and Ray Bradbury. If you have anybody you think deserves a kit, (outside of your next door neighbor or yourself, that is!) send us his name!

TONY ISABELLA: the Coming of the Avengers! part 1



As man is a social animal, it was only natural that he should join together with his fellow beings in some sort of society with each member to benefit from this artificial union. Our ancestors were quick to realize that two men could usually accomplish more than two single individuals, especially if they shared the same basic beliefs. Before long, men were working in teams toward identical goals for the common good.

The story-tellers of ancient times used this fact as a theme in many of their most popular stories. Jason, the rightful ruler of the land of Thessaly, was assisted by a group of heroes in his quest to regain his throne. The story of Jason and the Argonauts is easily one of the most popular legends of the Greek culture.

Hercules, mightiest of mortal men, was assisted by his fellow heroes on several occasions and, in turn, assisted them. The gods of ancient Greece often teamed up to go adventuring on Earth. Of course, they rarely ran into any mortals powerful enough to pose a threat, but they were ready to face such a foe together.

Greek mythology was not alone in teaming up two or more of its principal characters for the entertainment of the people. We have many accounts of Thor traveling with other Norse dieties and similar examples appear in other mythologies... Indeed, the giant battle of Ragnarok brings together all the forces of good and evil in one cataclysmic struggle to decide the fate of the universe.

Moving into the more recent centuries of our history, we can see that this idea of men battling together against a common enemy has never vanished from our literature. Stories of the Knights of the Round Table, Robin Hood and his merry men of Sherwood Forest, and the Three Muskeeteers continue to rank among the world's most-loved adventure classics.

With the appearance of the pulp fiction magazine on a large scale, the American reading public had an opportunity to read of the daring deeds of hundreds of fascinating characters. And the most popular of these larger-than-life heroes were usually those who were assisted by other heroes. One of the best examples was Doc Savage and his five aides, who still command a sizeable readership through paperback reprints of the original adventures.

In the late thirties, the comic book came in on the tails of the pulp magazines and offered a totally unique concept of a hero--a concept matched only by the gods of Greece and Rome, the super-hero. It has been estimated that over five hundred of this breed have appeared since the first days of

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MARK EVANIER: graphic traffic!*

*the Inhumans

Legends--at least those in comic books--tell of a radiant land where scientific evolution had advanced far beyond the exterior land of cavemen and savages. Among the era of primitive Man, the city of Attilan existed and within it, the accelerated inhabitants devoted themselves to technological betterment. No fluke of nature, they had been genetically fomented by the mysterious Kree race as little more than a human experiment. An unbounded imagination can only touch upon what they would have acheived had not they fallen victim to the outside--had not the "super-powers" they endowed themselves with caused primitive man to go on "witch hunts" and driven the erudites into hiding.

Mortal man knows not the location of the Great Refuge where these superiors--these Inhumans--dwell. In their fourty-fourth issue, the Fantastic Four encountered this refuge and its people. The trail of a mystery-villainess they'd previously battled, Madame Medusa, led to Reed Richards and his intrepid band meeting some of these ultra-men. Among them was Crystal, who has since won a place in both the team and its magazine as the romantic interest of Johnny Storm. Essentially, these Inhumans are among the finest of Marvel's creations. They are in no way typical of comic book characters and bear only superficial resemblances to any of the past. They are unique, not only in their powers and their personalities, but also in the brand of society they inhabit--a society which seems to know only tragedy and drama.

Consider their leader, Black Bolt. The genetic advancements developed in Attilan gave him a mastery of electrons which, in later years, developed into the power of levitation. He is, however, pledged to eternal silence. Exiled as a youth, he must now remain mute, for his very voice lends destruction to the air and death to the world. He conducts himself as a king...yet there is a certain pathos to him. He remains a silent, immobile rock in contrast to his brother, Maximus. Maximus, a raving lunatic in any sense of the word, seeks the throne. He has repeatedly made desperate yet futile attempts to seize power...power he can never truly have due to the Inhumans' undying loyalty to Black Bolt.

There is nothing common about the Inhumans, nor is there any facet of them which might easily wear thin in repeated appearances. They are most certainly deserving of their own magazine in this respect, and even if all the Inhumans aren't as fascinating as Black Bolt, there is at least a place in this strip for a mere crowd of super-heroes. This is most certainly true in a market where seemingly everyone who can perform feats be-

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SERIAListic Writings!

by Bruce Schweiger

During the forties, one of Marvel's (then Timely) finest characters was enjoying a great amount of success in the four-color world of comic books. Inevitably, the 1944 giant step took Captain America from the pages of Marvel comics to the silver screen in serial form.

Cap's film debut was not without its sacrifices. His shield, the symbol of great strength and power was the first to be lost. Next came his uniform chain-mail and his helmet wings, as well as a certain young fellow by the name of Bucky. There was also a major change of identity in store for the Sentinel of Liberty--From G.I. Private Steve Rogers to crusading and fearless district attorney Grant Gardner. What was projected onto the screen was nought but a shadow of the Captain which comic book readers had known and loved. Few objections, however, were noted. This fifteen episode Republic serial featured Dick Purcell as the battling D.A. and his crime-fighting alter-ego. Lorna Gray played his secretary, Gail Richards. The villain? Why, none other than the devilish Dr. Maldor who was played by (Who else--?) Lionel Atwill. The film was directed by John English with Elmer Clinton. No less than seven screen writers furnished the fantastic situations, an especially voluminous number, if we accept Larry Ivie's theory (presented in his "Monsters and Heroes" magazine) that the script had been intended for another Republic character and then been altered for Cap.

Ivie seems correct in his assumption---the plot is certainly unlike any Captain America story of that era. A group of archaeologists are being murdered by a mysterious character known as "The Scarab"--Actually, it is the evil Dr. Maldor out for revenge and profit. The expedition came into quite a tidy sum and Maldor is both spiteful and greedy. Maldor has at his disposal, a battery of super-weapons, among them "The Purple Death", "The Thunder Bolt", and a machine which can bring life to the dead. Cap pursues the Scarab throughout the serial, little realizing that the elusive villain is his"ally", Dr. Maldor. Our hero is lead into numerous traps before the Scarab is unmasked and brought to justice.

While it has never been regarded as a great serial, (Surprising, considering how poor some serials were!) the story of Captain America did boast some astounding stunt work. As if inspired by the Jack Kirby-style of action, the fight scenes were among the most dynamic and uninhibited in film history.

Republic serials were very well accepted in their day. It is unfortunate that no live action drama has been attempted since those cruder days. It would indeed be interesting to see a modern-day adaptation of a Marvel character utilizing refined film techniques.

Are comic books realistic? "What kind of question is that?", you may ask. It is actually a quite pertinent question and one worthy of consideration. Over the years, the pros and cons of the issue have been bantied about so much that the issue seems more muddled than ever. The answer isn't as simple as it might seem to be at first, for all the different publishing companies have enjoyed varying degrees of success in this matter. Let us, then examine the comics that come closest to home--those of the Marvel Comics Group.

Three main aspects of the comic magazine are story, art, and character portrayal. Each of these aspects has a separate goal, making it necessary to judge each according to its goal. The goal of the magazine as a whole is to entertain its readers and all other goals are subordinate, including that of realism. Just because something is realistic doesn't mean it has to be entertaining. In most cases tho opposite seems to be true--The "far-out" and the unusual are much maligned aspects of literature, but they are, by far, the most entertaining aspects despite what critics may say.

It is in the story where realism detracts most from the entertainment value of the comic. Though realism is almost out of place here, logic is not. A comic book story may be considered a success when it makes the impossible seem not only possible but plausible as well. When you think about it, there wouldn't be any super-heroes if comics were based upon realism. How entertaining would it be to spend twenty pages of the Fantastic Four following Sue Richards on a shopping trip to the local department store? The comic medium is not meant for realism. Is there, then, any realism at all in comics?

You can't say that realism is abounding in comic art. In fact, that's not even its goal. Most artists will tell you that they are trying to present something more than realism in their work; they are trying to transcend reality. Everything in the world of comic art is brighter and cleaner than in real life. Again the goal of entertaining the reader is clearly evident.

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Only YOU can prevent FORBUSH FIRES! (Ouch!)

the Inhumans (Continued)

yond the norm dons a costume and adopts a flashy name. Only Black Bolt resembles a super-hero and since he is the leader, our thoughts are led to a more deeper commentary. This is a lost land of super-powered beings. It is a society for ultra-powered citizens and different from our world in that when you ask a person what they "do", they don't tell you they design buildings or fix plumbing, they tell you that they read minds or absorb energy. This society is apart from ours also due to its constantly being persecuted and denied its right to exist in what is perhaps a more realistic portrayal of the super-hero idea than we are used to in comics. In a more pedestrian vein, Gorgon would go off to fight super-villains by stomping his awesome feet. He doesn't--He's learned that people would distrust and hate him as much--if not more--than the super-villain.

In considering this aspect, a major fault of the X-Men strip may be noted. Something slightly similar seems to have been envisioned at the outset of the X-Men, although it was changed so much that our original statement about Inhuman originality is still valid and true. The X-Men are a society of mutants and a minority of super-endowed beings in a wor which has neither faith nor a place for super-endowed beings. It seems curious that in ... people look up and see some visiting Asgardian and marvel at his being there or run from him in stark terror. In X-Men, an identical crowd will see an equally-strangely garbed figure and deduce that he is not only a mutant, but that he should be immediately attacked with every weapon at hand, including (once) an umbrella wielded by a little old lady who appears to have seen one too many "Gunsmoke" reruns. The Inhumans face the problem of coping with us mortals in a different way--they don't. In F.F. #47, Gorgon sums up the feeling caused by the Inhumans' persecution: "Humans can never be trusted!". At Mr. Fantastic's urging, though, it appears that they are beginning to lean towards giving humanity a second chance. They accept the F.F. as friends, quite contrary to their first encounter with man. Does the ultra-human, the homo superior have a place?

Crystal knows they do. The youngest Inhuman seems the most free from the prejudice. She has no qualms about associating with Johnny Storm, even after her initial notion that he was an Inhuman was disproved. Medusa has ventured outside the boundary of human vs. Inhuman feelings. In her earliest appearances and again in Marvel Super-Heroes #15, she fell in with the Frightful Four with results detrimental to all concerned. She just could not exist with them. In Spider-Man #62, she fell in with civilization and tried to be a part...but fate and an opportunistic advertiser alienated her more than ever and sent her back to the Great Refuge dead set against mingling further with mankind. And Triton has ventured into our world, with the results, a "Creature from the Black Lagoon" existence. The fact that he is different and more powerful than us instigates fear and hatred on the part of the faceless masses of our society. One wonders what might have happened if the Fantastic Four had met with and still had to cope with such sentiments.

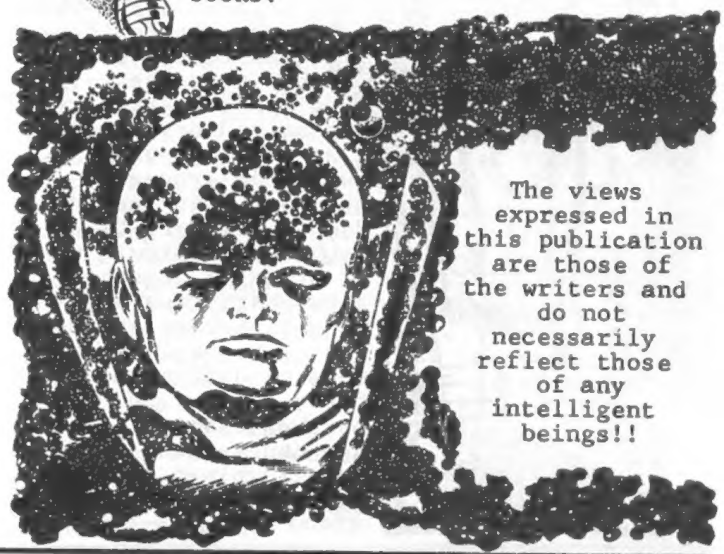
Stan Lee and Jack Kirby may take pride for the Inhumans. All the superlatives mustered for their creations are superfluous. They've taken the Inhumans this far and interesting possibilities await publication...Seeing the Inhumans move into our world further, seeing an end to Maximus once and for all, seeing Crystal break all ties with them, seeing a development of the interest between Medusa and Black Bolt, seeing Gorgon grow less cold and Triton grow more dynamic...These are things that cry to be seen in future developments of the Inhumans. In fact, it would be nice just to see more of the Inhumans.

The Great Refuge cannot remain hidden for much longer.

comic realism (Cont.)

Of all the aspects of comics, character portrayal is the most realistic. Here is Marvel's greatest accomplishment. Even if a character is a super-hero, he's still human and must react as a human would. For a hero to be popular, his readers have to be able to identify with him. Thus, he must be similar to the reader or someone he knows. If a super-hero shows that he's human--that he makes mistakes--then he is more realistic and at the same time more popular. The Thing is so popular because, despite his looks, he is one of the most realistic.

What may we conclude about realism in comics? It is necessary only when it helps fulfill the over-all goal of the comic book. It should be used only to add to, not detract from the entertainment value of the magazine as a whole. Realism is a good thing in its place and that place is not necessarily in comic books.



The views expressed in this publication are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of any intelligent beings!!

the Avengers (Continued)

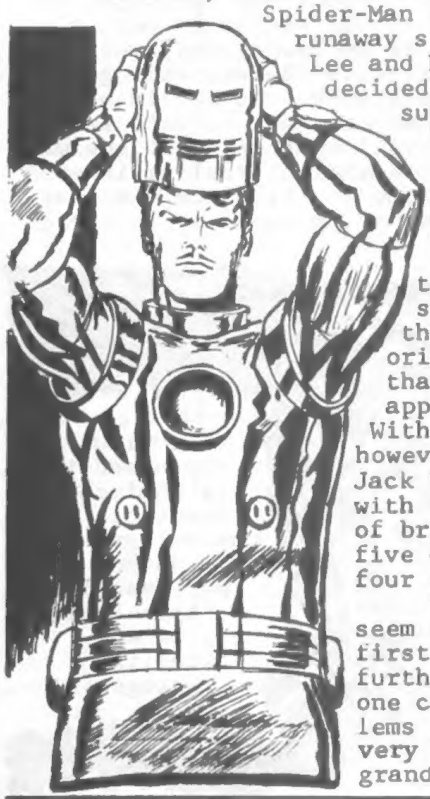
the comic book. Since the creation of the Fantastic Four, Marvel Comics have created nearly fifty super-heroes alone. Needless to say, the super-hero caught the imagination of America.

Before long, it was discovered that if one super-hero sold well, then two super-heroes could sell better. This, in part, was the reason why many super-guys found themselves saddled with yound companions, female companions, and even animal companions. Timely Comics, forerunner of the present Marvel group, thought they had a better answer and were the first to combine super-heroes from two different strips.

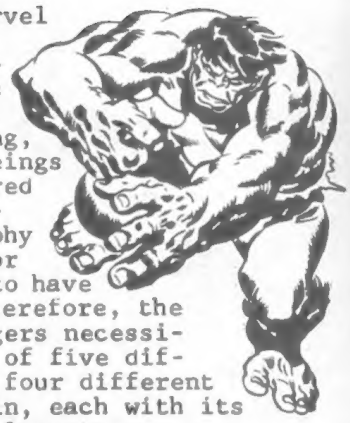
This first classic meeting took place in the eighth and ninth issues of Marvel Mystery Comics (June and July, 1940) between the blazing Human Torch and the mighty Prince Namor, the Sub-Mariner. This story proved so popular that Timely pitted these two drawing cards against each other in many succeeding battles, including one epic 60-page battle in an issue of the Human Torch. Perhaps this struggle between fire and water held a special magnetism, but more companies began attempting the teaming of their top characters. These other attempts, however were seldom as successful as the Torch-Namor clashes.

Timely's only other successful attempt at teaming their top characters was the short-lived All-Winners Comics #19 and #21 (Fall, 1946 and Spring, 1947). Though the feature was well done, it never caught on. This may be considered unfortunate if, like myself, you thought these stories to be two of the high points of the Golden Age of Comics.

In 1963, with their Fantastic Four and Spider-Man established as runaway sensations, Stan Lee and Marvel Comics decided to issue two new super-hero titles, both of them featuring teams of heroes. The X-Men could be considered the easier of the two to handle for the sole reason that they were the original characters that had never appeared previously. With the Avengers, however, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby were faced with the difficult task of bringing together five characters from four different strips.



This task may not seem so difficult at first glance, but upon further examination, one can see the problems involved. The very essence of the grand concept--the whole basis of the Marvel Comics Group was Stan Lee's idea of presenting the readers of his magazines with the stories of real, living, and breathing human beings who had somehow acquired fantastic powers. Because of this philosophy it became necessary for each comic character to have a life of his own. Therefore, the formation of the Avengers necessitated the combination of five different heroes and the four different strips they appeared in, each with its own unique theme and elements.



The Ant-Man and the Wasp specialized in the more common evil-doers. Their adventures usually took place in the lowest sections of Manhattan, amidst littered streets and cracked pavements. Iron Man, on the other hand, was the logical choice to deal with spies and saboteurs and usually confined his activities to the Tony Stark factories and the surrounding terrain. He also operated in many exotic locales, not entirely unlike those appearing in Milton Caniff's newspaper strips.

The Hulk stuck to the more conventional aliens, monsters, and underground civilizations in his escapades. Needing more room to battle than most characters, the Hulk usually stuck pretty much to the Southwest where his time was occupied with escaping from traps composed by the Army (at the expense of the taxpayers). And finally, Thor moved in an area, the scope of which encompassed both the more mundane Earth and the mystical Asgard. He added to the strip an element of sword-and-sorcery (or hammer-and-sorcery for you purists out there!) that was to appear continually in the Avengers and many other Marvel magazines.

You can see the many difficulties arising in uniting these characaters into any kind of an organization. Yet a point working favorably in this union was the similarity of each character to another one.

We can see that Donald Blake, Henry Pym, Anthony Stark, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) Janice Van Dyne were very dedicated individuals. Don Blake was portrayed from his first appearance as a dedicated man of medicine and in his second appearance, we see him serving a voluntary term as a medic in Vietnam. Indeed, it is his dedication that allows him to become Thor in the tale of his origin in Journey Into Mystery #83 (September, 1962). This dedication is a vital part of his origin.

We know that Henry Pym was a dedicated man of science before the death of Maria Trovaya, his first wife. After her death, Pym became a dedicated fighter of evil when he discovered the means to become the Ant-Man. In many stories where Henry Pym battled super-

Continued on Pg. 15

the Avengers (Continued)

agents of the communistic regime, one can see the determination he fights with and sense the extra force behind any blow that he uses against such an agent.

It was the death of her father that first caused Janet Van Dyne to dedicate herself to battle injustice as the Wasp, but she found another reason after her father's murderer had been beaten... She had fallen in love with Henry Pym. So while the Wasp remains dedicated to the fight against evil, her prime motivation is love for Henry Pym and the desire to share in his life completely.

Tony Stark, like Don Blake, was portrayed as a dedicated man from his first appearance. It is dedication to his work that was the cause of his traveling through dangerous territory in South Vietnam to get a first-hand test of some of his inventions. The exploding mine which forced him to wear a metal chest plate until recently only intensified Tony Stark's dedication to justice and freedom. Iron Man might have come into existence even if Anthony Stark had not been sentenced to living with an injured heart.

I have avoided discussing the Hulk in terms of dedication for one major reason, that being my belief that the Incredible Hulk is not particularly dedicated to the fight against evil. It is only during those rare times when a portion of Bruce Banner's intellect is in control of this behemoth's strength that the Hulk becomes a dedicated force for good. At all other times, he is merely using his power against an annoyance, for survival, or out of a feeling of sheer cussedness. You will see that this is only one of the factors that did not allow him to remain in the Avengers for more than two issues.

Don Blake, Henry Pym, and Anthony Stark also share a second very important character trait with one another. They are highly intelligent and capable. Even Janet Van Dyne, though she was more easily identified by her outwardly flighty attitude, was and is an intelligent young woman. This is why they were able to perform as an effective group without a formal leader. For sixteen issues, their roving chairmanship policy provided the small leadership that was necessary. This policy has never worked as effectively since those early issues, despite the addition of the Black Panther and the more mature Hawkeye/Goliath. Still it is the best form of leadership for a team like the Avengers.

As these similarities of the members proved more important than the differences, the original Avengers were a very compatiable group, with the sole and temporary exception of the Hulk, who was too beastial to contribute to the smooth function of the team. Yet even with the basic framework set, Marvel faced a formidable task in bringing these characters together as a team.

A catalyst was needed to bring the Avengers together. Of the four major menaces that Marvel had created at this time--Doctor Doom, the Incredible Hulk, Loki, and the Sub-Mariner (and I hasten to add that the Namor of those days was really much more of a villain than today's more heroic and noble version)--Stan Lee and Jack Kirby brought together Loki and the Hulk, truly a menace worth the attention of several super-heroes.

Avengers #1 contains the first example of an element of one of the four component strips serving as a springboard for a story concerning the entire group. Loki's desire to revenge himself on Thor and his inability to leave the Isle of Silence where Odin had imprisoned him would naturally cause him to try to lure Thor into a trap on said island by striking at him through an earthly agent. This is entirely in Loki's character. In fact, he has attacked Thor on several other occasions by using earthly or Asgardian foils as pawns in his games.

During the course of the issue, Hulk, Ant-Man, Wasp, and Iron Man join in and help defeat Loki mainly through his relentless hatred and ensuing carelessness about mortals. Before they can leave, however, Ant-Man suggests that they band together on a regular basis.

This suggestion is typical of the Ant-Man's character. In many of his solo adventures, he was almost defeated. This is one of the reasons he took on the Wasp as a partner, but he is more afraid that there will be no one to carry on his work than he is of being defeated. The others realize that such a group could do much good and the Hulk is sick of being hunted and hounded. Thus, the Avengers are formed.

As I have said many times before, the philosophy behind Marvel calls for each strip to have a life of its own. With life being the way it is, nothing remains static for any real amount of time. The Avengers have gone through many changes since this epic origin tale, which we shall hope to discuss in future episodes of this series. As we close this episode and await your response, we do so with the words permanently enshrined in every Marvelmaniac's vocabulary...

"TO BE CONTINUED!"

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answers to MARVEL I.Q. TEST

1.--b, 2.--c, 3.--a,b & c; 4.--a, 5.--Jack Kirby, Dick Ayers, John Severin, Tom Sutton; 6.--b, 7.--a, 8.--c, 9.--b, 10.--Jack Kirby, Don Heck, Steve Ditko, Gene Colan, Johnny Craig, George Tuska.

SCORING: Add five points for every correct answer and subtract ten for every question on which you answered "d". (That's what you get for being a wiseguy!) A score between thirty-five and fifty signifies that you are an extremely alert Marvel reader...or possibly that you are very good at answering dumb questions. A score between fifteen and thirty signifies that while you obviously have not been doing your homework, you know something about Marvel and we refer you to our supplementary text: "How to Win Friends and Influence Hulks" by Professor Irving Forbush, Marvel University--Published by the Fly-By-Night Publishing House. A score of less than ten signifies that you are either very unperceptive, very smart-alecky, or possibly a combination of both in varying degrees. Next month, we'll give you another chance to redeem yourselves...the questions will be a little bit harder, but those of you who cheated on this test won't notice a bit of difference!

#1 is just about over, so FACE LOOSE and HANG FRONT!! (That can't be right..!) Bye!

MARVELMANIA
STERANKO